

"Principlesofgovernaaance"GeneWolfe's Politics

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 02 Apr 2009

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Son of Witz — 02 Apr 2009, 17:52

I read The Prince a LONG time ago...

~witz

-----Original Message-----

From: brunians at brunians.org [mailto:brunians at brunians.org]

Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2009 10:48 AM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) "Principlesofgovernaaance"Gene Wolfe's Politics

Witz: go read Plato's "Republic", Aristotle's "Politics" and Niccolo Machiavelli's two works "Discourses On The First Ten Books Of Titus Livius" and "The Prince".

This will give you the vocabulary that you currently lack for discussing this kind of thing.

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refresher quote, questions below:

SHADOW XXXII Five Legs:

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"Severian. Name for me the seven principles of governance."

It was an effort for me to speak, but I managed (in my dream, if it was a dream)to say, "I do not recall that we have studied such a thing, Master."

"You were always the most careless of my boys," he told me, and fell silent.

A foreboding grew on me; I sensed that if I did not reply, some tragedy would

occur. At last I began weakly, "Anarchy . . ."

"That is not governance, but the lack of it. I taught you that it precedes all governance. Now list the seven sorts."

"Attachment to the person of the monarch. Attachment to a bloodline or other

sequence of succession. Attachment to the royal state. Attachment to a code

legitimizing the governing state. Attachment to the law only. Attachment to a

greater or lesser board of electors, as framers of the law. Attachment to an

abstraction conceived as including the body of electors, other bodies giving

rise to them, and numerous other elements, largely ideal."

"Tolerable. Of these, which is the earliest form, and which the highest?"

"The development is in the order given, Master," I said. "But I do not recall

that you ever asked before which was highest?"

Master Malrubius leaned forward, his eyes burning brighter than the coals of the

fire. "Which is highest, Severian?"

"The last, Master?"

"You mean attachment to an abstraction conceived as including the body of electors, other bodies giving rise to them, and numerous other elements, largely ideal?"

"Yes, Master."

"Of what kind, Severian, is your own attachment to the Divine Entity?"

I said nothing. It may have been that I was thinking; but if so, my mind was too much filled with sleep to be conscious of its thought. Instead, I became

profoundly aware of my physical surroundings. The sky above my face in all its

grandeur seemed to have been made solely for my benefit, and to be

presented for my inspection now. I lay upon the ground as upon a woman,

and the very air that surrounded me seemed a thing as admirable as crystal and as fluid as wine.

"Answer me, Severian."

"The first, if I have any."

"To the person of the monarch?"

"Yes, because there is no succession."

"The animal that rests beside you now would die for you. Of what kind is his

attachment to you?"

"The first?"

=====

ok, is the last one meant to be a joke about our current situation?

Abstraction, largely ideal.

maybe some conservatives can help me out here.

"Attachment to the person of the monarch"

On one hand, I don't understand how "Attachment to" is governance. Are the people attached, or is the governance attached?

Another question this brings up for me. This notion of a Divine Ruler...

You get it in the Grail myths, and I suppose in the Jesus Myth, this idea

of bringing back the Divine King. I'm not sure if that's right, but it's

something that seems to come up in various traditions. Anyway, While

anyone could sort of get behind letting God's Vicar rule, if it could be

proven. Yet we've had plenty of crappy rulers claiming God's mandate.

anyway, How can this idea of a Monarch that is the best system jibe with

reality lacking an unambiguous 'seal of approval' from God?

Let me rephrase? This seems like a sort of religious right position

(maybe I'm totally wrong) So, would anyone toss away democracy in favor

of a monarch? How can this notion not be "largely ideal" when it hinges

upon the character of a single person?

I'm not sure if I'm making this clear. I'm trying to understand how this

can be considered the highest state of governance in a practical,

non-ideal world.

just asking...

~Witz

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Apr 2009, 18:05 · in reply to Son of Witz

OK, reread it and read the other three.

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~Witz

Stanislaus B. — 02 Apr 2009, 19:55 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

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